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THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

NOVEMBER 1913

EDUCATIONAL NEWS AND EDITORIAL COMMENT

The Board of Superintendents of the city schools of New York has issued a circular addressed to parents of children who stutter.

Stuttering There is no question at all that the early years of training in the school are of very great importance in avoiding this difficulty. Stuttering is a very serious handicap to any child, and if proper attention is given early in the school course to the cultivation of correct, distinct articulation the danger is very much decreased, if not, indeed, entirely removed. One of the specialists in this country who has had more experience with stuttering than most teachers or physicians has asserted with emphasis that if every child who has a disposition to stutter could be trained properly in the primary years he could be relieved entirely of this defect. There are some cases where surgical operations are necessary, but in most cases the difficulty is a functional difficulty in breathing and in the proper control of the vocal organs. The circular issued by the Board of Superintendents is therefore a very timely encouragement to parents to give their children proper training.

Your child has formed incorrect habits of speech. He will not speak correctly until he has been carefully trained in correct speech and has formed the habit of correct natural speech.

The speech improvement class has been formed for the purpose of systematically training pupils in correct natural speech and is in charge of a teacher who has made a thorough study of the principles of speech. Your child should become a member of that class. You should visit the class occasionally and co-operate with the teacher, that you may continue the work of building

correct speech habits when the child is at home. This is very important, as he can have at best only a very small part of each day under instruction for speech, and he is constantly using his former bad habits, which are altogether too firmly fixed at present.

The physical, breathing, and vocal exercises are excellent material for home practice, but the application of these to his everyday speech is a very important factor in his training. Your co-operation with the teacher will more than repay you and the child by the results obtained.

Though progress seems to be slow, do not lose confidence in the teacher, or fail to encourage the child in his efforts. Do not try scolding, threatening, or ridicule as a means of cure. Never unduly excite him. Never indulge a child because of his stuttering. All stutterers are despondent at times, and hence the attitude toward the child should always be a cheerful one. Stutterers, almost without exception, talk too rapidly; therefore encourage slow, deliberate, and modulated speech. Singing tones can be used to advantage. The child should be led to acquire correct speaking by observing, listening to, and imitating slow, distinct, well-spoken conversations.

Try to get the child to breathe naturally. It is not necessary to say a full sentence in a single breath. Let the child feel free to pause for breath at the end of any phrase.

Pay particular attention to correct articulation of sounds. When any sound has been learned, see that the child uses the correct form in his daily speech.

Let the child frequently read aloud or tell an incident to one or more members of the family, or let him recite from memory. Call attention to any improvement, have patience, and do not attempt to correct all mistakes at once.

He should be carefully kept away from stutterers outside of school.

The physical condition of the child is of the highest importance. He needs nourishing diet, with no stimulants (tea or coffee), and plenty of exercise in the open air. The greatest help toward a cure is perfect health.

The normal-school situation in the state of Pennsylvania has been the subject of investigation and of much discussion of late.

The following statement from the *Philadelphia*
Pennsylvania *Ledger* is therefore interesting as indicating the
Normal
Schools changes which are being worked out in these institutions:

A beginning has been made of standardizing the dozen or more normal schools of this state by the purchase of the West Chester Normal School for a consideration of \$12,900.

It is not generally known that most of the training schools for teachers of Pennsylvania—those in this city and Pittsburgh being notable exceptions—have remained distinctively private academies whose courses of instruction and budget systems are only secondarily under the authority of the state. Private

ownership and personal gains too frequently take precedence of educational standards. Consequently, no two of the schools offer diplomas which have precisely the same face value throughout the commonwealth.

All this is to be changed by the wise provisions of the new school law which provides for the purchase of the schools from their stockholders. In this first instance of transfer the deal was consummated without any of the sharp bargaining which over-shrewd holders of stock might have felt inclined to resort to at the expense of the public-school treasury. All trustees and stockholders of the other normal schools are expected to show the same fidelity to the cause of public education and relinquish their ownership claims to the state at the earliest practical moment for a proper compensation.

There should be no delay in raising all these training schools for teachers to the level of the high plane established by the Normal School for Girls and the School of Pedagogy of this city. The face value of every normal-school certificate should be approximately the same and should always represent throughout this state and elsewhere sound scholarship and the most complete pedagogic equipment obtainable.

The *Elementary School Teacher* is very glad indeed to give publicity to the following notice and request:

A School Exhibit During the late fall and early winter the City Club of Chicago will hold in its clubrooms an exhibit of public buildings and grounds for the purpose of stimulating municipalities to make improvements in police stations, streets and alleys, playgrounds, schools, etc. A large space will be devoted to school buildings and grounds and it is the desire of the subcommittee in charge of the school exhibit to secure helpful suggestions from all persons interested in the success of the public schools.

The general purpose is to show the functions of school buildings and grounds and the adequacy of the buildings and grounds for the performance of these functions. Particular attention will be paid to heating, lighting, ventilating, seating, and general care of buildings. All persons interested are asked to send suggestions to William J. Bogan, Chairman, Subcommittee of School Buildings and Grounds.

The last legislature of Tennessee passed a compulsory attendance law. There was much discussion during the meeting of the legislature as to the probable effect of that law in increasing the attendance of children on the public schools of the state. An answer to these questions comes with the opening of the schools this autumn. The following clipping from Columbia, Tenn., is typical of news items which are appearing in the public press in different parts of that state:

**Compulsory
Education in
Tennessee**

More and more the effects of the compulsory school law are becoming apparent in every section of the state, and these effects have not missed Maury County.

The principal and most noticeable effect, perhaps, is the shortage of the school books. The local depository for the school books recently made out its order for books, based on the estimate of the demands for the opening of the schools in the county, and this order was only partially filled, being some three hundred books or more short, in spellers and primers.

The explanation of this shortage from the state agent was that the compulsory school law had had the effect of increasing the estimated demand for the books that were short.

It will be noticed that the shortage is in the primary grades, just the ones that would be effected by the school law referred to. It will probably be August 20 to 25 before this shortage can be supplied.

Other sections of the state have been disappointed even worse than the local depository. While the books were short on the recent order, the schools in the county that have already opened are not suffering, and only the schools that are to open later may be subjected to some inconvenience for a short time for the books with which to supply the primary grades.

According to the state superintendent of public instruction the county schools all over Tennessee are raising the Macedonian cry for more teachers to meet the necessities of the increased daily attendance.

C. H. J.

The Buffalo meeting of the International Congress on School Hygiene, August 25-30, was a big event. Hundreds of delegates from all over the world crowded the hotel corridors and the various rooms in which the sessions were held. Some five hundred papers were presented during the week on a great variety of topics. The following outline taken from the exhibit that was part of the Congress gives an idea of the scope of health direction now undertaken in public schools:

International Congress on School Hygiene
Child Study: Eugenics; Lectures and Exhibits; Special Schools for Defectives; Trained Psychologist; Laboratory for Examinations.

Preventive Hygiene: Sex Hygiene; Care of Eyes, Ears, and Teeth; Food and Adequate Rest; Cleanliness.

Physical Training: Gymnasiums; Games and Dancing; Corrective Gymnastics under a Competent Director.

Wider Use of the School Plant: For Lectures and Exhibits; School Lunches; Summer Supply of Pure Milk; Child Welfare Work; Little Mothers' Clubs.

Medical Inspection: With Adequate Dispensary Service; Co-operation of

Family Physician, of Principal, Teachers, and Parents; Home Visitation; School Nurses; Contact with Juvenile Court.

Preventive Measures: Proper Buildings with Adequate Light, Heat, Ventilation; Correct Furniture; Teachers' Restrooms; Sanitary Toilets, Sterilized Towels, Drinking-Fountains; Open-Air Rooms; Well-printed Books; Curriculum That Is Correct from Health Standpoint; Matron for the High School.

Personal Hygiene: Bathing, Food, Air, Exercise, Rest, Clothing; Care of Eyes, Nose, Throat, Teeth. Infection and Immunity; Study Habits; Beauty; Efficiency.

It is impossible to report the proceedings in limited space. A few excerpts may be given:

"We have in this country 183,000 students in colleges and universities; 187,000 patients in hospitals for the insane. Do the results justify our methods of education?"—Potter.

"The acquisition of good habits and not of information is our educational aim."—Burnham.

"The schools should develop a rudimentary philosophy of life."—Burnham.

"Free eyeglasses are an economy, not a charity."—Wessels.

"With an epidemic of contagious disease existing," said Dr. McLaughlin, "there is a tendency in most communities to close the schools. In the Philippines, on the contrary, it is the policy of the Bureau of Health to keep the schools open because of their extraordinary value in teaching the precepts of disease prevention.

"They are used in cholera epidemics as demonstrating stations where the children were taught how to protect themselves and their parents against cholera. The same principle is used in combating tuberculosis, hookworm, dysentery, and beri-beri. The children are taught how these diseases are contracted and how they may be prevented."

Dr. Charles V. Chapin maintained that, generally speaking, the schoolroom is not a factor in the spread of many contagious diseases.

"Because scarlet fever and diphtheria are much less prevalent in summer and increase during the autumn," he said, "it is argued that the increase must be due to school attendance. It is, however, clearly shown by figures, derived from various cities, that there is no real correlation between these diseases and school attendance, but rather between them and seasonal temperature.

"Detailed study of cases also shows that very few cases of scarlet fever and diphtheria are contracted in school. It is otherwise with measles and whooping cough, the spread of which seems to be greatly facilitated by school attendance. That other contagious diseases are spread in schools, we have no evidence.

"The way to prevent infection in school is to teach personal cleanliness. Abolish the drinking-cup and the towel in common use. Keep careful watch

of contagious diseases and exclude them. The fumigation of schoolrooms is a concession to prejudices of the past."

Dr. Walter W. Roach told of an interesting experiment with two classes of third-grade pupils in Philadelphia. One class occupied a room heated and ventilated in the usual way. The second class studied all winter in a classroom with the windows wide open.

"The windows of the one room were kept constantly down from the top and up from the bottom, and the room was cut off from the regular heating plant of the building. The ordinary desks were removed, and replaced with chair desks which could easily be moved by the pupils themselves to clear the floor space for frequent physical exercises. As cold weather approached, the children were provided with woolen sweaters, worsted caps, soft woolen blankets, and knitted woolen gloves. Thus their lower extremities were protected from the cold floor with no disturbance of the circulation.

"Week by week during the fall and winter and spring we weighed and examined these pupils, watched their study and their play, and compared their scholarship with that of the children in the warm-air room. The children from both rooms came from the same kind of homes, so that the test was as fair and as accurate and searching as possible. As might have been expected, we found at the end that the pupils in the open-window room had gained on an average more than twice as much in weight as those in the warm-air room. They kept wholly free from colds, and were much more regular in attendance than the others."

E. R. D.

The International Congress on Hygiene, which convened at Buffalo and which is reported in another section, has aroused

School	very widespread discussion throughout the country
Hygiene	on the problems of hygiene in the school.

A number of cities and institutions are experimenting with open-air schools as a means of improving the health of pupils.

Open-Air Schools	The project which is being organized at Bryn Mawr has received wide currency. This plan, in brief, consists in giving a complete outdoor education for seven years to a number of girls. They enter the school at ten and continue until they finish their college career. This thoroughgoing experiment will be watched with interest. A number of school systems are introducing open-air schools for children who suffer from tuberculosis, undernourishment, or some other physical disability. The <i>Harrisburg, Pa., Independent</i> has the following note in regard to a school to be opened in that city:
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If the plans of the medical inspector of the Harrisburg school district are carried out, a second open-air school for the education of tubercular pupils will be established in Harrisburg this fall. Money for such a school was appropriated in the annual budget this spring and active steps are now being made to establish the school.

An open-air school is also to be started in Portland, Ore.

Another symptom of the increased interest in the hygiene of school children is the appointment of a new officer in the city of Houston, Tex., as reported in the *Houston Post*:

**A Supervisor
of Hygienics**

Supervisor of hygienics is the newest office in the Houston city school system. It was created at a meeting of the School Board Monday night, when it was decided that a regular physician should be employed for that position to be placed on the pay-rolls at a salary of about \$300 per month and to have entire supervision of all matters pertaining to health, sanitation, and hygiene in the various schools.

The spread of psychological clinics in connection with public-school systems or under other auspices is a further evidence of the attention which is given to the mental abnormalities of children. According to a note sent out by the Bureau of Education there are now forty psychological clinics in the United States. The first clinic for the examination of deficient children was founded by Dr. Witmer at the University of Pennsylvania in 1896.

An attempt to improve the physical conditions of the school-room in such a way as to prevent physical abnormalities is reported from Chicago. According to the *Chicago Tribune* the

**A Trial of
Slanting Desks**

superintendent of schools is about to instal in several rooms desks with a top having a slant of 35 degrees. Educational theorists have for a long time condemned the flat-top desk for children. The slanting top favors a more erect posture in reading, writing, drawing, etc., but the practical difficulties have thus far prevented the adoption of a desk with much slant. The results of this experiment will therefore be of much interest.

Another modification of the physical equipment of the school-room is reported by the *Detroit News*:

The new Sampson School at Ironwood and Begole Streets, in the Sixteenth Ward, has been equipped with movable chairs and tables similar to those in

use in the ordinary business office. The pupils who flock to the new school this morning will be the first public-school children who have not been forced to absorb the rudiments of education at the nailed-to-the-floor desk and bench. The experiment of substituting movable chairs and tables will be watched with interest outside of Detroit, for it is new to the country, generally, as well as to this city.

The opening of the school year with the increase in pupils over the past year has caused attention to be particularly directed toward the insufficient accommodations of the school buildings. Various means are being adopted to meet the problem which arises from the congestion of the schools. The *Globe and Commercial Advertiser* of New York reports a method of taking care of two sets of children in the same school without unduly reducing the length of the school day for the pupils. The plan is the so-called Ettinger plan with some modifications.

Unless present plans are changed when the Board of Education meets this afternoon, and that does not now appear likely, the last act necessary to carry into effect the plan for reducing part time approved unanimously by the board two weeks ago will be taken. It is to amend the by-laws to reduce the school day for all young children from five to four hours, and to authorize double sessions of five hours each in the upper grades. The Brooklyn Teachers' Association has asked for a hearing, but it is too late. The Public Education Association has followed its usual policy of seeking delay. The members of the Board of Education are convinced that a careful study has been made of the problem by the superintendents, that prompt action is necessary, and that after the plan has been tried out any changes found to be necessary can be made. There isn't any evidence at present that any will be.

Everything is in readiness to put the plan into operation without delay. In anticipation of favorable action by the board today, City Superintendent Maxwell, by direction of the board of superintendents, ordered district superintendents and principals that to put the proposed plan into operation it is necessary to act promptly. "There should be no delay," he says in his circular to them, "in making preparations to put into operation the recommendations."

It is significant to note that teachers and principals in general have not regarded this plan with great favor for reasons which are obvious. It appears, however, to be a better expedient than to reduce the school day in length.

Another method of relieving congestion consists in expanding

the available school space by means of providing portable buildings. This plan has been in operation in Chicago for some time and is to be extended this year by the addition of a hundred portable buildings containing 188 rooms. A similar plan is being put into operation in Cleveland, Toledo, and Columbus, Ohio, Racine, Wis., South Bend, Ind., and Long Beach, Cal., among other places. The time will doubtless come when school boards will have sufficient foresight to provide for the increasing needs of the school population, but until such time comes school administrators will find it necessary to adopt such temporary expedients.

A report which is made by a committee of the National Education Association and published by the Bureau of Education has called attention to the relation between the increase in cost of living and the salaries received by teachers. Part of the report is thus summarized by the *North-west Journal of Education*:

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Living and
Teachers'
Salaries

Dr. Robert C. Brooks, executive secretary for the National Education Association committee, which prepared the report, shows by Bureau of Labor figures that wholesale prices in 1911 were 44.1 per cent higher than in 1907; that retail prices had increased 50.2 per cent in the same period; while in June, 1912, retail food prices were 61.7 per cent higher than in 1896. With these figures as a basis he analyzes teachers' salaries in five cities in different parts of the United States and demonstrates the plight of the teachers in the problem of increased cost of living.

The natural consequence of the diminishing returns from the salaries is the agitation of many teachers' associations for increased salary. Another symptom of the same attitude of mind is the effort which is being made toward pensions for retired teachers. A circular from the chairman of the Committee to Advance Insurance Legislation for Teachers of Illinois has for its purpose the awakening of interest in a bill which is to be introduced into the Illinois legislature. This is known as the Illinois Teachers' Insurance and Retirement Fund Bill and was framed by a committee of Freeport teachers. The provisions of the bill are briefly summarized in the circular as follows:

1. Its name, Insurance. It is a better investment than ordinary life insurance, as the benefit is *annual, for life*, instead of a single endowment.

2. It requires twenty-five years of service, fifteen in Illinois. No age limit is stated.
3. It provides for illness and other loss of time (Secs. 548, 549, 551, 554, 555).
4. If a teacher leaves the profession, it allows her to withdraw three-fourths of all money paid in.
5. If a teacher dies before completing twenty-five years of service, her estate receives three-fourths of all money paid in.
6. It provides that the fund shall be in the custody of the state treasurer and subject to the same requirements.
7. It requires the state to make an annual appropriation to the fund.

That there is another side to the question of teachers' salaries is indicated by the action of the Board of Education of Philadelphia in limiting the attendance of students at the normal school. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* reports the action in the following words:

**Salaries and
Qualifications**

Drastic regulations to limit the attendance of students at the Normal School and thus reduce the number of applicants for positions as teachers in the local system, it was stated yesterday, would result from the present controversy as to whether graduates of the classes of 1912 or 1913 should be given preference in appointments by the Board of Education.

The school body has been divided for several months over the problem of supplying places for all available teachers and, it was declared by officials yesterday, it will endeavor to avoid these differences in the future by keeping the supply in proportion to the demand.

If this action in limiting the number who enter the normal school is accompanied by raising the standard of entrance, it deals with the fundamental principle affecting salaries. It is obvious that salaries are dependent, not merely upon the efforts of the interested individuals to obtain compensation adequate to meet their needs, but also upon the relation between supply and demand and upon the professional equipment of those who offer themselves for service. The legislature of Wisconsin recognizes this fact in the recent law in which a minimum salary of \$400 for teachers was fixed. In the same law in which a minimum salary was fixed, a minimum requirement of education and equipment was also included.

F. N. F.